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The Palestinian Exodus of 1948

Simha Flapan *

The exodus of Palestinian Arabs, both forced and voluntary, began with the publication of the UN Partition Resolution on 29 November 1947 and continued even after the armistice agreements were signed in the summer of 1949. Between 600,000 and 700,000 Palestinian Arabs were evicted or fled from areas that were allocated to the Jewish state or occupied by Jewish forces during the fighting and later integrated de facto into Israel. During and after the exodus, every effort was made—from the razing of villages to the promulgation of laws—to prevent their return.

The magnitude of the flight took many Jewish leaders by surprise, but as will be seen, the flight itself was not entirely unexpected.

According to the partition plan, the Jewish state would have had well over 300,000 Arabs, including 90,000 Bedouin.¹ With the Jewish conquest of areas designated for the Arab state (western Galilee, Nazareth, Jaffa, Lydda, Ramleh, villages south of Jerusalem, and villages in the Arab Triangle of central Palestine), the Arab population would have risen by another 300,000 or more. Zionist leaders feared such numbers of non-Jews would threaten the stability of the new state both militarily—should they become a fifth column for Arab armies—and socially—insofar as a substan-

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tial Muslim and Christian minority would challenge the new state's Jewish character. Thus the flight of up to 700,000 Arabs from Palestinian villages and towns during 1948 came to many as a relief. Chaim Weizmann was hardly alone when he described it as "a miraculous simplification of the problem."²

The Arabs attributed the flight to a deliberate Zionist design to drive the population out of the country by means of intimidation, terror, and forceful expulsion. The Zionists denied all responsibility, claiming that the Arab Higher Committee had called upon the civilian population to clear the way for the Arab armies and stay out of battle areas until the war was over and the Zionists were defeated. Recently declassified documents throw a new light on this question.

Let us begin with the Zionist claim—found in all official Zionist history and propaganda and all Israeli information publications—that Israel was not responsible for the exodus and in fact did everything in its power to stop it. The most solid evidence to support this contention comes from the efforts made in Haifa by Shabatai Levy, the mayor, and Abba Hashi, head of the Workers' Council, to stop the panic flight of the Arabs by persuading them to give up the struggle and surrender to the Haganah. In April 1948, Ben-Gurion sent Golda Meir on a special mission to Haifa to join these efforts. The mission was unsuccessful. In collaboration with the Irgun, the Haganah then succeeded in conquering the Arab sections of the town, driving the inhabitants from their homes. The Haganah's conditions for truce were so humiliating that the Arab National Committee of Haifa could not accept them. Suffering heavy casualties and unable to receive reinforcements from other Palestinian fighting forces or from the Arab states, the Arabs of Haifa appealed to the British army to provide them with land and sea transport to Acre and Lebanon.³

According to Ben-Gurion's biographer, Michael Bar-Zohar, "the appeals of the Arabs to stay, Golda's mission, and other similar gestures were the result of political considerations, but they did not reflect [Ben-Gurion's] basic stand. In internal discussions, in instructions to his people, the 'old man' demonstrated a clear stand: it was better that the smallest possible number of Arabs remain within the area of the state."⁴ Ben-Gurion himself wrote in his diary after the flight of the Arabs began, "We must afford civic and human equality to every Arab who remains," but, he insisted, "it is not our task to worry about the return of the Arabs."⁵

The claim that the exodus was an "order from above," from the Arab leadership, proved to be particularly good propaganda for many years, despite its improbability. Indeed, from the point of view of military logistics, the contention that the Palestinian Arab leadership appealed to

the Arab masses to leave their homes in order to open the way for the invading armies, after which they would return to share in the victory, makes no sense at all. The Arab armies, coming long distances and operating in or from the Arab areas of Palestine, needed the help of the local population for food, fuel, water, transport, manpower, and information.

The recent publication of thousands of documents in the state and Zionist archives, as well as Ben-Gurion's war diaries, show that there is no evidence to support Israeli claims. In fact, the declassified material contradicts the "order" theory, for among these new sources are documents testifying to the considerable efforts of the AHC and the Arab states to constrain the flight.

A report of the Jewish Agency's Arab section from 3 January 1948, at the beginning of the flight, suggests that the Arabs were already concerned: "The Arab exodus from Palestine continues, mainly to the countries of the West. Of late, the Arab Higher Executive has succeeded in imposing close scrutiny on those leaving for Arab countries in the Middle East."⁶ Prior to the declaration of statehood, the Arab League's political committee, meeting in Sofar, Lebanon, recommended that the Arab states "open the doors to . . . women and children and old people if events in Palestine make it necessary."⁷ But the AHC vigorously opposed the departure of Palestinians and even the granting of visas to women and children.⁸

To support their claim that Arab leaders had incited the flight, Israeli and Zionist sources were constantly "quoting" statements by the Arab Higher Committee—now seen to be largely fabricated—to the effect that "in a very short time the armies of our Arab sister countries will overrun Palestine, attacking from the land, the sea, and the air, and they will settle accounts with the Jews."⁹ Some such statements were actually issued, but they were intended to *stop* the panic that was causing the masses to abandon their villages. They were also issued as a warning to the increasing number of Arabs who were willing to accept partition as irreversible and cease struggling against it. When the Arab armies came to retaliate for what the Jews did to the Arabs, such collaborators would become hostages in Jewish hands.

In practice the AHC statements boomeranged and further increased Arab panic and flight.¹⁰ But there were a great many other statements that could not be so misconstrued. According to Aharon Cohen, head of Mapam's Arab department, the Arab leadership was very critical of the "fifth columnists and rumormongers" behind the flight.¹¹ When, after April 1948, the flight acquired massive dimensions, Azzam Pasha, secretary of the Arab League, and King 'Abdallah both issued public calls to the Arabs not to leave their homes.¹² Fawzi al-Qawuqji, commander of the Arab Liber-

ation Army, was given instructions to stop the flight by force and to requisition transport for this purpose. The Arab governments decided to allow entry only to women and children and to send back all men of military age (between eighteen and fifty).¹³ Muhammad Adib al-'Umri, deputy director of the Ramallah broadcasting station, appealed to the Arabs to stop the flight from Janin, Tulkarm, and other towns in the Triangle that were bombed by the Israelis.¹⁴ On 10 May Radio Jerusalem broadcast orders on its Arab program from Arab commanders and the AHC to stop the mass flight from Jerusalem and its vicinity.

Palestinian sources offer further evidence that even earlier, in March and April, the Arab Higher Committee broadcasting from Damascus demanded that the population stay put and announced that Palestinians of military age were to return from the Arab countries. All Arab officials in Palestine were also asked to remain at their posts.¹⁵

Why did such pleas have so little impact? They were outweighed by the cumulative effect of Zionist pressure tactics that ranged from economic and psychological warfare to the systematic ousting of the Arab population by the army.

This is not to say, however, that these tactics were part of a deliberate Zionist plan, as the Arabs contended. It must be understood that official Jewish decision-making bodies—the provisional government, the National Council, and the Jewish Agency Executive—neither discussed nor approved a design for expulsion, and any proposal of the sort would have been opposed and probably rejected. These bodies were heavily influenced by liberal, progressive labor, and socialist Zionist parties. The Zionist movement as a whole, both the left and the right, had consistently stressed that the Jewish people, who had always suffered persecution and discrimination as a national and religious minority, would provide a model of fair treatment of minorities in their own state.

In the debates with Great Britain, and later with UNSCOP and at the UN General Assembly, the Jewish Agency and the Yishuv gave solemn assurances that they would respect the rights of the Palestinians. Weizmann declared that the "Jews are not going to encroach upon the rights and territory of the Arabs."¹⁶

Once the flight began, however, Jewish leaders encouraged it. Sharett, for example, immediately declared that no mass return of Palestinians to Israel would be permitted.¹⁷ Cohen insisted in October 1948 that "the Arab exodus was not part of a preconceived plan." But, he acknowledged, "a part of the flight was due to official policy. . . . Once it started, the flight

received encouragement from the most important Jewish sources, for both military and political reasons.”¹⁸

According to the evidence now available, these sources went beyond mere “encouragement.” Those in charge of defense seemed quite prepared for the flight of the Palestinians. As Ben-Gurion put it in a speech delivered on 16 June 1984 to Israel’s provisional government: “Three things have happened up to now: a) the invasion of the regular armies of the Arab states, b) our ability to withstand these regular armies, and c) the flight of the Arabs. I was not surprised by any of them.”¹⁹

During this period, Ben-Gurion, as head of the governing council, was assisted by the leaders of the Haganah, the general staff of the newly formed Israeli Defense Forces, and the directors of the Jewish Agency and of the settlement department of the Jewish National Fund, as well as advisers on Arab affairs and executives of the Jewish Agency in charge of the acquisition and production of arms. They were not only responsible for planning the defense and the war but also determined the policies and strategies regarding the borders of the Jewish state; the locations, numbers, and placement of new Jewish settlements; the demography of all the districts; and, ultimately, the destiny of the Arab population. They were the real decision makers. Not all the members of Ben-Gurion’s team agreed on how to treat the Arab opposition to the mufti, what the future status of the Arab areas was to be, or what rules should be applied to land requisition and compensation. But they were all of one mind that the Arabs understood only the language of force and that any proposals for compromise would be taken as a sign of weakness. Above all, they accepted Ben-Gurion’s view that the state of Israel should be demographically homogenous and geographically as extensive as possible.

It is impossible to know all the details of the team’s deliberations and plans, since the relevant materials are still classified in the Ben-Gurion and IDF archives and some of the discussions and decisions have not even been transcribed. Records are available from archives and diaries, however, and while not revealing a specific plan or precise orders for expulsion, they provide overwhelming circumstantial evidence to show that a design was being implemented by the Haganah, and later by the IDF, to reduce the number of Arabs in the Jewish state to a minimum and to make use of most of their lands, properties, and habitats to absorb the masses of Jewish immigrants.²⁰

It is true, of course, that many Palestinians left of their own accord. Tens of thousands of community leaders, businessmen, landowners, and members of the intellectual elite who had the means for removing their

families from the scene of fighting did so. Thousands of others—government officials, professionals, and skilled workers—chose to immigrate to Arab areas rather than live in a Jewish state. Nearly half the Arab population of Haifa moved to Nazareth, Acre, Nablus, and Janin before their city was captured by the Haganah on 23 April 1948. They feared unemployment or discrimination in a Jewish state. The Arab quarters of Wadi Nisnas and Karmel were almost completely emptied out. (This voluntary move to areas designated for the Arab state was interpreted by some observers as evidence that those leaving saw partition as irreversible and looked for ways to accommodate themselves to it.)²¹

But hundreds of thousands of others, intimidated and terrorized, fled in panic, and still others were driven out by the Jewish army, which, under the leadership of Ben-Gurion, planned and executed the expulsion in the wake of the UN Partition Resolution.

The balance is clear in IDF intelligence estimates. As of 1 June 1948, 370,000 Arabs had left the country, from both the Jewish and the intended Arab parts. Jewish attacks on Arab centers, particularly large villages, townlets or cities, accounted for about 55 percent of those who left; terrorist acts of the Irgun and LEHI, 15 percent; whispering campaigns (psychological warfare), about 2 percent; evacuation ordered by the IDF, another 2 percent; and general fear, about 10 percent. Therefore, 84 percent left in direct response to Israeli actions, while only 5 percent left on orders from Arab bands. The remaining 11 percent are not accounted for in this estimate and may refer to those who left voluntarily. (The total reflects only about 50 percent of the entire exodus since a similar number were to leave the country within the next six months.)²²

In private, however, Ben-Gurion was not averse to making his real views clear. Thus, on 19 December 1947, he demanded that “we adopt the system of aggressive defense; with every Arab attack we must respond with a decisive blow: the destruction of the place or the expulsion of the residents along with the seizure of the place.”²³ He declared: “When in action we . . . must fight strongly and cruelly, letting nothing stop us.”²⁴ Even without direct orders, the goal and spirit of real policy were understood and accepted by the army.

That Ben-Gurion’s ultimate aim was to evacuate as much of the Arab population as possible from the Jewish state can hardly be doubted, if only from the variety of means he employed to achieve this purpose: an economic war aimed at destroying Arab transport, commerce, and the supply of food and raw materials to the urban population; psychological warfare, ranging from “friendly warnings” to outright intimidation and

exploitation of panic caused by dissident underground terrorism; and finally, and most decisively, the destruction of whole villages and the eviction of their inhabitants by the army.²⁵

In a letter to Sharett, Ben-Gurion focused on economic issues, observing that “the important difference with [the riots of] 1937 is the increased vulnerability of the Arab urban economy. Haifa and Jaffa are at our mercy. We can ‘starve them out.’ Motorized transport, which has also become an important factor in their life, is to a large extent at our mercy.”²⁶

The destruction of the Palestinian urban bases, along with the conquest and evacuation (willing or unwilling) of nearby villages, undermined the whole structure of Palestinian life in many parts of the country, especially in the towns. Ben-Gurion’s advisers urged closing stores, barring raw materials from factories and various other measures. Yadin, the army’s head of operations, advised that “we must paralyze Arab transportation and commerce, and harass them in country and town. This is the way to lower their morale.”²⁷ And Sasson proposed “damaging Arab commerce—even if Jewish commerce will be damaged. We can tolerate it, they cannot . . . we must not hit here and there, but at all transportation at once, all commerce and so on.”²⁸ Clearly, significant numbers of Arabs without food, work, or the most elementary security would choose to leave, especially given that almost all of their official leadership had left even before the fighting began.

The military campaign against the Arabs, including the “conquest and destruction of the rural areas,” was set forth in the Haganah’s Plan Dalet. Plan D, formulated and put into operation in March 1948, went into effect “officially” only on 14 May when the state was declared.²⁹ The tenets of the plan were clear and unequivocal: the Haganah must carry out “activities against enemy settlements which are situated within or near to our Haganah installations, with the aim of preventing their use by active [Arab] armed forces.” These activities included the destruction of villages, the destruction of the armed enemy, and, in case of opposition during searches, the expulsion of the population to points outside the borders of the state.³⁰

Also targeted were transport and communication routes that might be used by the Arab forces. According to an interview with Yadin some twenty-five years later, “the plan intended to secure the territory of the state as far as the Palestinian Arabs were concerned, communication routes, and the strongholds required.”³¹ Yadin and his assistants outlined nine courses of operation that included “blocking the access roads of the enemy from their bases to targets inside the Jewish state,” and the “domination of the main arteries of transportation that are vital to the Jews, and destruction of

the Arab villages near them, so that they shall not serve as bases for attacks on the traffic."³²

The plan also referred to the "temporary" conquest of Arab bases outside Israeli borders. It included detailed guidelines for taking over Arab neighborhoods in mixed towns, particularly those overlooking transport routes, and the expulsion of their populations to the nearest urban center.

The psychological aspect of warfare was not neglected either. The day after the plan went into effect, the Lebanese paper *Al-Hayat* quoted a leaflet that was dropped from the air and signed by the Haganah command in Galilee:

We have no wish to fight ordinary people who want to live in peace, but only the army and forces which are preparing to invade Palestine. Therefore . . . all people who do not want this war must leave together with their women and children in order to be safe. This is going to be a cruel war, with no mercy or compassion. There is no reason why you should endanger yourselves.³³

Exactly how cruel and merciless was already clear from the example of the Dayr Yasin massacre. The village of Dayr Yasin was located in a largely Jewish area in the vicinity of Jerusalem and had signed a nonaggression pact with its Jewish neighbors as early as 1942. As a result, its inhabitants had not asked the Arab Higher Committee for protection when the fighting broke out.³⁴ Yet for the entire day of 9 April 1948, Irgun and LEHI soldiers carried out the slaughter in a cold and premeditated fashion. In a 1979 article dealing with the later forced evacuation of Lydda and Ramlah, *New York Times* reporter David Shipler cites Red Cross and British documents to the effect that the attackers "lined men, women and children up against walls and shot them," so that Dayr Yasin "remains a name of infamy in the world." When they had finished, they looted the village and fled.³⁵

The ruthlessness of the attack on Dayr Yasin shocked Jewish and world public opinion alike, drove fear and panic into the Arab population, and led to the flight of unarmed civilians from their homes all over the country. Former mayor of Jerusalem al-Khalidi called the attack on Dayr Yasin senseless, especially in view of the pacific nature of the village and its relations with its Jewish neighbors.³⁶ But from another perspective, it made perfect sense. More panic was sown among the Arab population by this operation than by anything that had happened up to then. Dayr Yasin is considered the direct reason for the flight of the Arabs from Haifa on 21 April and from Jaffa on 4 May and for the final collapse of the Palestinian fighting forces. While Ben-Gurion condemned the massacre in no uncertain terms, he did nothing to curb the independent actions of the Jewish

underground armies, whose planned provocations and indiscriminate bombings were always successful in raising national tensions.³⁷

On 4 January 1948, the Irgun used a car bomb to blow up the government center in Jaffa, killing twenty-six Arab civilians. Three days later, they planted explosives at Jaffa Gate in Jerusalem, and another twenty-five Arab civilians were killed. A pattern became clear, for in each case the Arabs retaliated, then the Haganah—always condemning the actions of the Irgun and LEHI—joined in with an inflaming “counterretaliation.”

For its part, the Haganah avoided outright massacres like Dayr Yasin but, through destruction of property, harassment, and rumor-mongering, was no less determined to evacuate the Arab population and prevent its return. Indeed, by the end of the 1947 and 1948 war, the IDF’s burning, blowing up, and mining of the ruins accounted for the destruction of 350 Arab villages and townlets situated in areas assigned to the Jewish state or those conquered during the fighting. Thousands upon thousands of houses, workshops, storerooms, cattle pens, nurseries, and orchards were destroyed, while livestock was seized and equipment looted or burned. The operation, executed with a strict efficiency, was inexplicable since most of these villages were not engaged in heavy fighting against the Jewish forces and most of the inhabitants had fled either in fear of a “new Dayr Yasin” or in response to “friendly advice” from Jewish neighbors.

How can one explain the fact that many of those who encouraged and implemented the scorched-earth policy toward the Palestinian Arabs were generally inspired by liberal and socialist ideas, and many were even members of *kibbutzim*?

Certainly the urgency of the situation had some effect on ethical concerns. There was the feeling that it was now or never for the chances of a Jewish state. Generated in part by the global situation following World War II, and the revolutionary changes taking place in various parts of the world, this stance was intensified by fear that the historic UN resolution could be reversed if implementation were delayed.

Moreover, the military and strategic benefits of the scorched-earth policy were evident that liberal and socialist commanders and their troops were able to overcome any qualms. The initial flight of the refugees proved to be an effective means of disturbing and blocking Arab military planning. The refugees, deprived of food and other basic necessities, attacked and began to plunder Arab food stores, squatting in military camps and becoming a heavy burden on both civil and military administrations. This problem increased with the arrival of Qawuqji’s Arab Liberation Army,

since his soldiers also needed food, fuel, vehicles, and quarters, and often had to requisition them by force. The subsequent panic flight of refugees contributed a good deal to the failure of the Arab fighting forces to resist effectively the advancing Jewish troops, as reports of events in Acre, Nablus, Janin, Tulkarm, and Gaza testify.³⁸

More basic attitudes fueled the policy decisions as well. The vision of Zionism—of the social, economic, and cultural rebirths of the Jewish people—held little room for Arab aspirations. Born and cultivated in Europe at the end of the nineteenth century, Zionism was influenced by the movements for national liberation and social reform prevalent at the time—including the Russian revolutionary movement. There was a decidedly romantic aspect to Zionism, so that only when the first settlers faced the reality of Palestine did they even realize that another people inhabited the country. The specific “Arab ideologies” developed by the Zionist parties to deal with those Palestinians ranged from almost total oblivion to political programs for cooperation and coexistence. But even most left-wing Zionists, while envisaging a Jewish-Arab socialist state in all of Palestine, continued to believe that day-to-day affairs should be based on nonintegration, on separatism. For most of the Jews in Palestine, the Palestinian Arabs *were always marginal*, living outside the pale of Jewish life, even if they were the majority. Their presence was significantly felt only when they took up arms to fight against what they considered to be Zionist encroachment on their rights and property. And what they considered defense emerged in the Zionist consciousness as the intrusion of violence on the peaceful endeavors of the Jewish settlers. This peculiarly narrow angle of vision made it possible for many Jews to consider themselves revolutionary socialists while absolutely ignoring or minimizing the presence and rights of another people.

The righteousness that allowed the Jews to defy accepted ethical norms was further intensified by the fact that *they projected onto the Arabs the wrath and vengefulness that they felt toward the Nazis*. This process was facilitated by propaganda that consistently depicted the Arabs as the followers of Hitler. The theme of “Hitler’s pupils” ran through Ben-Gurion’s speeches regardless of the reality of serious contacts with Arabs and Palestinian leaders about achieving a *modus vivendi*.

This theme was added to the general belief that the opposition and hostility of the Arabs to Zionism was irreversible, and that coexistence between Jews and Arabs was totally impossible. During the early years of the state, Ben-Gurion stated that “the Arabs cannot accept the existence of Israel. Those who accept it are not normal. The best solution for the Arabs in Israel is to go and live in the Arab states—in the framework of a peace

treaty or transfer.”³⁹ This view reflected the longstanding attitude of the majority of Israel’s political and intellectual elite and the great majority of the masses of Jews in Israel. It explains the small number of voices that protested against the destruction of Arab villages and the eviction of their inhabitants, and it explains the weakness of the protests that were heard.

For Ben-Gurion as well as for the majority of the Jewish inhabitants of Palestine on the eve of the birth of the state, the flight of the Palestinians was very welcome. It helped to secure the homogenous character of the Jewish state, and despite many sincere declarations to the contrary, this is what they hoped the war would achieve. On 6 February Ben-Gurion expressed his deep feelings of joy at the newly achieved “Jewishness” of Jerusalem: “Since Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, it was never more Jewish than it is today. In many Arab neighborhoods in the western part of the city, one does not see a single Arab. I do not assume this will change.”⁴⁰ When he saw Haifa for the first time after the flight, he was shocked. Haifa was like “a dead city, a corpse city,” he noted in his journal, a “horrifying and fantastic sight.” But here too the advantages were clear: “What happened in Haifa can happen in other parts of the country if we will hold out . . . it may be that in the next six or eight months of the campaign, there will be great changes in the country, and not all to our detriment. Certainly, there will be great changes in the composition of the population of the country.”⁴¹

With the proclamation of the birth of Israel, the Arab governments launched an invasion into the new state. Those Arabs who had remained in Israel after 15 May were viewed as “a security problem,” a potential fifth column, even though they had not participated in the war and had stayed in Israel hoping to live in peace and equality, as promised in the Declaration of Independence. But that document had not altered Ben-Gurion’s overall conception. Once the Arab areas he considered vital to the constitution of the new state had been brought under Israeli control, there still remained the problem of their *inhabitants*. On 11 May he noted that he had given orders “for the destruction of Arab islands in Jewish population areas.”⁴²

The most significant elimination of these “Arab islands” took place two months after the Declaration of Independence. In one of the gravest episodes of this tragic story, as many as fifty thousand Arabs were driven out of their homes in Lydda and Ramleh on 12–13 July 1948. In Ben-Gurion’s view Ramleh and Lydda constituted a special danger because their proximity might encourage cooperation between the Egyptian army, which had started its attack on Kibbutz Negbah, near Ramleh, and the Arab Legion,

which had taken the Lydda police station. However, Operation Danny, by which the two towns were seized, revealed that no such cooperation existed.

In Lydda, the exodus took place on foot. In Ramlah, the IDF provided buses and trucks. Originally, all males had been rounded up and enclosed in a compound, but after some shooting was heard, and construed by Ben-Gurion to be the beginning of an Arab Legion counteroffensive, he stopped the arrests and ordered the speedy eviction of all the Arabs, including women, children, and the elderly.⁴³ In explanation, he said that “those who made war on us bear responsibility after their defeat.”⁴⁴

With the population gone, the Israeli soldiers proceeded to loot the two towns in an outbreak of mass pillaging that the officers could neither prevent nor control. In those days there was no military machinery able to deal with the problem. Even soldiers from the Palmach—most of whom came from or were preparing to join kibbutzim—took part, stealing mechanical and agricultural equipment.

This was not the first time that the Israeli soldiers were found guilty of looting. Nor was looting a problem confined to the army. Jewish civilians also rushed to plunder Arab towns and villages once they were emptied of their inhabitants. On 1 May, Ben-Gurion noted that, in Haifa, professional thieves took part in the looting initiated by the Irgun, and that booty had also been found in the possession of Haganah commanders. He described other unsavory aspects of the operations as well: “There was a search for Arabs, they were seized, beaten, and also tortured.” In October, he again referred to large-scale looting by the Haganah in Beersheba, which would appear to indicate that his previous exhortations had not been effective.⁴⁵ His moral revulsion, however, did not lead him either to insist that offenders be brought to trial or to abandon the strategy of evictions. Indeed, very few soldiers and civilians were tried for looting or indiscriminate killing.

Events in Nazareth, although ending differently, point to the existence of a definite pattern of expulsion. On 16 July, three days after the Lydda and Ramlah evictions, the city of Nazareth surrendered to the IDF. The officer in command, a Canadian Jew named Ben Dunkelman, had signed the surrender agreement on behalf of the Israeli army along with Chaim Laskov (then a brigadier general, later IDF chief of staff). The agreement assured the civilians that they would not be harmed, but the next day, Laskov handed Dunkelman an order to evacuate the population. Dunkelman’s account of the incident casts light on the policy of the IDF: “I was surprised and shocked,” he wrote. “I told him [Laskov] I would do nothing of the

sort—in light of our promises to safeguard the well-being of the town's population, such an action would be superfluous and harmful."

When Laskov realized that Dunkelman did not intend to carry out the order, he left. Two days later, Dunkelman was transferred from Nazareth. "I felt sure," he wrote, "that this order had been given because of my defiance of the 'evacuation' order. But although I was withdrawn from Nazareth, it seems that my disobedience did have some effect. It seems to have given the high command time for second thoughts, which led them to the conclusion that it would, indeed, be wrong to expel the inhabitants of Nazareth. To the best of my knowledge, there was never any more talk of the 'evacuation' plan, and the city's Arab citizens have lived there ever since."⁴⁶

The "problem of the inhabitants" was dealt with in two other ways as well: the establishment of a military administration and the revival of the old Zionist idea of population "transfer."

Ben-Gurion introduced military rule in all areas allocated by the UN to the Arab state that had been taken over by the Jewish forces during the early fighting. With the declaration of the state in May 1948, this formally became the military administration. It was later extended to include Arab areas within the Jewish state, as a result of which 80 percent of the Arab population of Israel lived under the control of military governors acting on behalf of the general staff and the minister of defense. The military administration's authority was grounded in the British Mandatory Emergency Regulations, introduced in 1936 to repress the Arab Revolt and later widely employed against the Jewish resistance movements in 1946 and 1947.

These emergency laws authorized the army and its military governors to exercise complete control over the life, property, work, and freedom of movement of civilians under their jurisdiction. The presiding officials could detain or imprison local inhabitants without charges or trial for an indefinite period, expel them from the country, confiscate or destroy their property, and prohibit them from working or pursuing any other kind of activity. They were also empowered to close off entire areas for indefinite periods. All of this was done in the name of security, and no proof was required to justify any action in any court of law. In fact, by order of the Ministry of Defense, the military administration was immune from any interference by legislative or judicial authorities. Thus, the most vital problem of shaping Jewish relations with the Palestinian people lay in the hands of Ben-Gurion and the army. The Knesset, the cabinet, and the courts were able to deal with this issue only when Ben-Gurion needed their

support for other major plans. Although protests were frequent—cabinet ministers, Knesset members, journalists, and public figures often expressed alarm at reports of army practices, and questions were raised in various forums—the military administration retained its authority until 1965, when it was abolished by the Knesset.⁴⁷ (Since the Six-Day War in 1967, the occupied territories have been under a similar military administration.)

The concept of population transfer, although it had always appealed to Zionist thinkers, was never adopted as official policy.⁴⁸ In 1937, Ben-Gurion declared that the idea—which immediately outraged the Arabs—was morally and ethically justified, nothing more than the continuation of a natural process taking place, as Jews displaced Arabs.⁴⁹ The implementation of transfer occurred to Ben-Gurion, as already noted, after the flight of the Arabs from Haifa in April. In practice, the concept of transfer—or to be more precise, retroactive transfer—offered a rationale for expulsion. Under the guise of a hypothetical exchange, the already excluded Palestinians were now to be seen as replacements for Jewish immigrants from Arab countries. The project became more concrete on 5 June when Joseph Weitz of the colonization department of the Jewish National Fund proposed it as a way of dealing with the problem raised by Count Bernadotte about the return of the refugees.⁵⁰ Ben-Gurion appointed what became known as the transfer committee, composed of Weitz, Danin, and Zalman Lipshitz, a cartographer. At the basis of its recommendations, presented to Ben-Gurion in October 1948, was the idea that the number of Arabs should not amount to more than 15 percent of Israel's total population, which at that time meant about 100,000.⁵¹

A week after he created the committee, Ben-Gurion told the Jewish Agency: "I am for compulsory transfer; I don't see anything immoral in it." For tactical reasons, he was against proposing it at the moment, but "we have to state the principle of compulsory transfer without insisting on its immediate implementation."⁵² He found no contradiction between the policy of transfer and the achievement of Jewish-Arab peace, which he always presented as one of the ultimate aims of Zionism.

The committee examined the problem of the Palestinian refugees from a variety of angles and brought its conclusions to Ben-Gurion on 26 October. Estimating that there were about 506,000 refugees, almost equally divided between rural and urban dwellers, the committee reasserted that the Arabs themselves were responsible for their flight and that they could not return for two reasons. First, they would constitute a fifth column; second, enormous sums of money—beyond what Israel could pay—would be required for their return and rehabilitation. On the other hand, Arabs

choosing to remain (as long as they amounted to no more than 15 percent of the state's total population) would enjoy the full rights of citizenship. The committee proposed that the refugees be settled by Arab governments in Syria, Iraq, Transjordan, and—if they were Christian—in Lebanon. Various agencies would finance their resettlement, and Israel would compensate them for assets they were forced to leave behind. The committee discussed the goal of bringing in Jews from Iraq and Syria but questioned what would happen if the Arab countries refused to accept the refugees. Finally, the committee insisted that no refugees be allowed to return to border villages and that the Arabs must be self-supporting.⁵³

Hand in hand with measures to ensure the continued exodus of Arabs from Israel was a determination not to permit any of the refugees to return. All of the Zionist leaders—Ben-Gurion, Sharett, and Weizmann—agreed on this point. As Ben-Gurion wrote: “If we win, we shall not annihilate the Egyptian or the Syrian people, but if we fail and fall to defeat, they will exterminate us; because of this, we cannot permit them to return to the places which they left. . . . I don’t accept the formulation that we should not encourage their return: *Their return must be prevented . . . at all costs.*”⁵⁴ On 5 July 1948, Sharett informed Abba Eban at the UN: “Regarding return Arabs who left habitations in Israel, please insist categorically our attitude: no question their return while war lasts, whose duration includes truce, and after war will depend on general settlement.”⁵⁵

Writing to Weizmann on 22 August 1948, Sharett indicated, “We are determined to be adamant while the truce lasts. Once the return tide starts, it will be impossible to stop it, and it will prove our undoing. As for the future, we are equally determined—without, for the time being, formally closing the door to any eventuality—to explore all possibilities of getting rid, once and for all, of the huge Arab minority that once threatened us.” He pointed out that permanent resettlement of “Israeli” Arabs in the neighboring territories would make surplus land available in Israel for settlement of Jews.⁵⁶

Eban, one of Israel’s younger diplomats at the time, sounded the same theme to Sharett on 27 April 1949. He considered the refugee problem to be a direct consequence of a war launched by the Arab states against Israel. In his view, it was a humanitarian problem, but one inseparable from all the other issues outstanding between Israel and the Arab states. Israel was anxious to make its contributions, he explained to Sharett, but resettlement in neighboring areas was its main principle of solution.

Ben-Gurion continued the policy of reducing the numbers of Arabs in Israel even after the armistice treaties with the Arab states were signed.

Forceful expulsion was no longer possible, but as pointed out above, the Military Administration possessed enough means to “persuade” numerous Arab inhabitants that they would prefer immigration over humiliation and harassment. This was the case, for example, in the villages of Faluja, ‘Iraq al-Manshiyyah, and Majdal near the Gaza Strip, where between June and September 1950 some 1,159 villagers applied for permission to cross with their dependents into Gaza.

A more sophisticated form of pressure was achieved by legislation regarding property, particularly the Absentees’ Property Law of 1950. This law, first promulgated in December 1948, stated that any Arabs not at their places of residence on 29 November 1947 would be considered absentees and their property subject to appropriation by the custodian of enemy property (an office soon replaced by the custodian of *absentee* property). Even Arabs who had traveled to a neighboring town to visit relatives for the day were considered absentees. As a result, two million dunams were confiscated and given to the custodian, who later transferred the land to the development authority. This law created the novel citizenship category of “present absentees” (*nifkadim nohahim*), that is, Israeli Arabs who enjoyed all civil rights—including the right to vote in the Knesset elections—except one: the right to use and dispose of their property. The interesting thing about this law is that it was proposed and formulated by none other than Moshe Sharett, to whom many attributed a liberal and humane attitude toward the Arabs. Another law, borrowed from the Ottomans, permitted the minister of agriculture to confiscate any uncultivated land. The revival of this law was linked to the power of the Military Administration to enclose an area and prevent its cultivation, a procedure that made confiscation rather simple.⁵⁷

A detailed account of exactly how “abandoned” Arab property assisted in the absorption of the new immigrants was prepared by Joseph Schechtman, an expert on population transfer who helped create the myth of “voluntary” exodus.

It is difficult to overestimate the tremendous role this lot of abandoned Arab property has played in the settlement of hundreds of thousands of Jewish immigrants who have reached Israel since the proclamation of the state in May 1948. Forty-seven new rural settlements established on the sites of abandoned Arab villages had by October 1949 already absorbed 25,255 new immigrants. By the spring of 1950 over 1 million dunams had been leased by the custodian to Jewish settlements and individual farmers for the raising of grain crops.

Large tracts of land belonging to Arab absentees have also been leased to Jewish

settlers, old and new, for the raising of vegetables. In the south alone, 15,000 dunams of vineyards and fruit trees have been leased to cooperative settlements; a similar area has been rented by the Yemenites Association, the Farmers Association, and the Soldiers Settlement and Rehabilitation Board. This has saved the Jewish Agency and the government millions of dollars. While the average cost of establishing an immigrant family in a new settlement was from \$7,500 to \$9,000, the cost in abandoned Arab villages did not exceed \$1,500 (\$750 for building repairs and \$750 for livestock and equipment).

Abandoned Arab dwellings in towns have also not remained empty. By the end of July 1948, 170,000 people, notably new immigrants and ex-soldiers, in addition to about 40,000 former tenants, both Jewish and Arab, had been housed in premises under the custodian's control; and 7,000 shops, workshops and stores were sublet to new arrivals. The existence of these Arab houses—vacant and ready for occupation—has, to a large extent, solved the greatest immediate problem which faced the Israeli authorities in the absorption of immigrants. It also considerably relieved the financial burden of absorption.⁵⁸

In short, the “retroactive transfer” had become a reality.

Was there any significant opposition to official policy? On many occasions, the forceful expulsion of the Palestinian population generated protests in liberal and progressive circles against the violation of elementary human rights. News of the expulsions, of brutal treatment, of looting, and of the terrible suffering of Arabs forced to leave their homes and properties were reported by witnesses, among them religious dignitaries, doctors and nurses, church-school teachers, journalists, Quakers, members of the staff of UN mediator Count Bernadotte, and people from the International Red Cross who moved in after the fighting.

Internally, the first voices of protest came from Haganah members of kibbutzim, moshavim, and regional organizations who were responsible for security matters. Until the spring of 1948, they had been asked to promote good relations and nonaggression pacts with their Arab neighbors in order to limit and weaken al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni's call for armed resistance to partition. The policy of eviction came as a surprise to them, and the anti-Arab propaganda caused them confusion and anxiety. Typical of this reaction was the letter from Yitzhak Avira, one of the founders of Kibbutz Moaz Haim in the Beisan Valley, to Ezra Danin: “Recently, a new mood has pervaded the public—‘the Arabs are nothing,’ ‘all Arabs are murderers,’ ‘we should kill them all,’ ‘we should burn all their villages,’ etc., etc. . . . I don't intend to defend the Arab people, but the Jewish people have to be defended from deteriorating into far-reaching extremism.”⁵⁹

There was also a good deal of protest, mainly from the same people who had always favored active conciliation with the Arabs, such as the Ihud

group led by Judah L. Magnes. There were protests by members of kibbutzim who witnessed the brutal expulsion of their Arab neighbors, with whom they had maintained friendly relations. There were protests by young people and by writers and journalists who, during the fighting, were brought face to face with the tragedy of the Arab population evicted from their homes and forced to leave the country. There were protests against looting, rape, and indiscriminate killing, in Mapai, in the government, and in the Knesset. But the only consistent political struggle against the policy of expulsion came from the Communist party and Mapam.

Although it maintained valuable contacts with Arab communists in the League for National Liberation, the Communist party had always been ostracized and isolated in the Yishuv because of its opposition to Zionism, Jewish immigration, and colonization. Thus, the one significant voice of opposition was that of Mapam. Formed in January 1948 from Hashomer Hatzair and Ahdut Haavodah, Mapam embraced most of the socialists and kibbutz populations in Israel and was at the time the second largest party in the country. It provided the Haganah with most of its commanders and was the backbone of the Palmach. Its slogan "For Zionism, for socialism, and for the brotherhood of peoples" appeared every day on the masthead of its daily newspaper, *Al Hamishmar*. It had two ministers in the provisional government and was seen as the only alternative to Mapai in the Histadrut and in the country. (In the first elections to the Knesset in January 1949, Mapam received close to 15 percent of the vote.) Its Zionist record was impeccable, since its members had taken the lead in every important national undertaking, in settlement, education, immigration, and defense. Nonetheless, in its call for peaceful cooperation between Jews and Arabs within the Jewish state, and in the region as a whole, together with its acceptance of an independent Palestinian state as set out in the UN Partition Resolution, Mapam was among the most sensitive to the problems of Jewish-Arab relations.

On 25–27 May 1948—in the midst of the fighting but *after* most of the exodus had taken place—Mapam's political committee met to protest official policy. The nine resolutions they adopted began by expressing opposition to the expulsion of the Arabs from the Jewish state in the process of being established and called on the non-belligerent Arabs in Israel to stay put and cooperate in making peace. They also opposed the unnecessary destruction of Arab villages. Condemning the unlawful requisitioning of factories and other means of production belonging to Arabs who fled the country, they demanded that all confiscated Arab assets be registered at their real value. They called on the government to heed the plight of the

many Arab citizens of the Jewish state who had become refugees, to appeal to the refugees to return when peace was restored, and to return the property of all those not guilty of war-mongering. The two final resolutions demanded that party members taking part in the war maintain the “purity of arms” and that Ben-Gurion be replaced as minister of defense.⁶⁰

The mixture of caution and outright protest reflected in these resolutions reveals the inherent contradictions between the two components of the party—those who rejected the legitimacy of the campaign against the Arabs and those who accepted it. This division can be traced as well in the political committee’s discussion, which provides compelling evidence of Israel’s responsibility for the Arab flight.

Aharon Cohen, the head of Mapam’s Arab department and a member of a Hashomer Hatzair kibbutz, opened the discussion. He stated that of the 352,000 Arabs in Israel at the time of the partition resolution in November 1947, only 50,000 remained. “What is happening today,” he said, “is the destruction of the means of livelihood of those Palestinian Arabs who fled and will want to return.”

A number of other Hashomer Hatzair speakers described with outrage what was happening in the field, and why. Eliezer Bauer, a member of the party’s Arab department, sharply criticized the actions of the army: “It is self-evident that war materials must be requisitioned, but everything is being taken—metal, wood, building materials, cars, domestic appliances, sewing machines, etc. *After* the requisitioning is carried out, regulations are issued not to take over the property of the Arabs who remain in their homes.” In the Jezreel Valley villages of Abu Zrik and Abu Shusha, he continued, the whole population was arrested or driven out and the order was given to blow up the villages, including every last house and stone.

Yaakov Hazan, one of the foremost leaders of Hashomer Hatzair and Mapam, passionately condemned the inhumane treatment of the Arabs. “The phenomenon of peasants fleeing from their land is without parallel and didn’t take place [in the war] among the Russians, the Poles, or the Germans,” he said. “All parts of the Israeli public, from the kibbutz member to the simplest citizen, are involved and we will pay a harsh political and moral price for what is being done.”

Hazan went on to insist that policy could not be based on what the Arabs “might have done” to the Israelis. Haganah participation in killing, plundering, and raping in Arab villages in the Galilee, he argued, could be ended by the shooting of one soldier. He rejected the notion that the Israeli army was bound to be like all other armies. “Poison is being injected into our lives and it won’t stop with the end of the war.” Hazan warned that the

final result would be a kind of Jewish fascism, and that if the country didn't build a united labor movement of Jews and Arabs, it would end up similar to South Africa.

The participants from Ahdut Haavodah did not dispute the description of what was happening, but they did interpret its significance differently. War had its own meaning and its own rules, they said, despite what might be morally indefensible in any other situation. Thus Avraham Levite, one of the two party secretaries, acknowledged that the cutting off of Jaffa was "very inhumane from the point of view of absolute values." Still, he could "both justify and welcome as a matter of the highest morality and political necessity every act of conquest—and the removal of every Arab settlement—dictated by the needs of war." Levite agreed that "every lawless act, all theft and looting, must be fought vigorously, up to and including the meting out of the death sentence." But, he felt, the immoral behavior of the soldiers was finally a "secondary question."

What conclusions can be drawn from the Mapam discussion? Of primary significance is the fact that it took place at all. Clearly, party members recognized that the army was trying to purge the state of Arabs, making no distinction between "friendly" and "hostile" Arabs, ensuring that Arabs who fled would not be able to return, and justifying essentially political policies by military explanations.

The discussion also indicated that Mapam's strength in the army command still could not stem the tide of what was occurring, and party members may even have borne responsibility for it. Ben-Gurion, it should be noted, referred to the body he set up to deal with refugees and infiltrators as the "Committee for Removal and Expulsion" (*vaadat akirah v'girush*), though the editors of his *War Diaries* thought it appropriate to change the name to the "Committee for Evacuation and Population."⁶¹ The operation was entirely in the hands of the army. Though more than half of the high command were members of Mapam, they did not question orders. Some of them played an active role in the eviction of the Arab population, especially those who supported the Ahdut Haavodah position that the war should be exploited to increase the territory of the Jewish state and ultimately abolish partition. Moreover, it was Mapam members Yigal Allon, Moshe Carmel, and Yitzhak Rabin who carried out the major evictions: Allon in western Galilee and later, together with Shimon Avidan, in the Negev; Carmel in the north; and Rabin in Lydda and Ramleh. Indeed, during the last stages of the War of Independence, Allon submitted a detailed plan to Ben-Gurion for the military conquest of the West Bank, arguing that the Jordan River would provide the best strategic

border. He believed that a substantial part of the Arab population would move east because of the military operations. "Our offensive has to leave the way open for the army and for the refugees to retreat. *We shall easily find the reasons or, to be more accurate, the pretexts, to justify our offensive, as we did up to now* [emphasis added]." ⁶² Ben-Gurion rejected the idea, although he had made a similar suggestion a few months earlier. ⁶³ With Egypt's signing of an armistice, and King 'Abdallah's pressure for a peace treaty, an attack on the West Bank would have led to a direct confrontation with Great Britain, as well as a political conflict with the United States, which was interested in maintaining British bases in the Middle East in order to prevent Soviet penetration.

The myth of a voluntary Palestinian exodus in response to Arab "orders from above" has survived with an astounding perseverance. In retrospect, the myth can be seen as the inevitable result of the denial of the Palestinians' right to national independence and statehood, a principle that guided Zionist policies from the very beginning.

Political in origin, the myth became an important component in the prevailing self-image of the new state. First of all, it served to cover the traces of the unsavory methods employed by the authorities—from the confiscation of food, raw materials, medicaments, and land to acts of terror and intimidation, the creation of panic, and, finally, forcible expulsion—and thus to exorcise the feelings of guilt in many sectors of society, especially the younger generation. Many of them bore the burden of the operations that caused the Arab flight. They personally implemented the instructions to destroy whole villages, forcing men, women, and children to leave their homes for some unknown destination beyond the borders. Many of them took part in operations where they rounded up all able-bodied men and then crowded them into trucks for deportation. Their feelings of moral frustration and revulsion were not easily eradicated.

In addition to alleviating guilt feelings, the myth served as a successful weapon in political warfare. It helped strengthen the age-old Zionist thesis that the Palestinians were not a people with national aspirations and rights but simply Arabs who could live anywhere in the vast expanses of the Arab world. On 4 May 1948, Ben-Gurion wrote that "history has proved who is really attached to this country and for whom it is a luxury which can be given up. Until now not a single [Jewish] settlement, not even the most distant, weak, or isolated, has been abandoned, whereas after the first defeat the Arabs left whole towns like Haifa and Tiberias in spite of the fact that they did not face any danger of destruction or massacre." ⁶⁴

This contention ignored the fact that the large majority of the Palestinians who fled their homes did not leave the country. Like many Jews caught in the same circumstances, they evacuated battle areas and moved to safer places.⁶⁵ The spontaneous movement of Palestinians back to the country—what was known then (and punished) as “infiltration,” and which started even before the end of the war—and the persistent refusal of the majority of the Palestinian refugees to “rehabilitate” themselves in Arab countries must certainly be considered demonstrations of the tenacity of their attachment to their homeland.

The myth of voluntary exodus became Israel’s major argument against accepting even partial responsibility for the refugee problem, not to mention consideration of the refugees’ right to repatriation. Moreover, the refusal to permit the refugees to return helped create the impression among Israelis that the Palestinian problem would gradually disappear.

Historical developments, however, moved in the opposite direction, and the refugees came to symbolize the dispossession, exile, and anomalous conditions of the Palestinian people and the impossibility of achieving Jewish-Arab peace without satisfying their national aspirations. It was the refugee problem that bedeviled relations between Israel and the Arab states. For the Arab states, Israel’s recognition of the refugees’ right to repatriation was the only face-saving formula that could have allowed them to admit their humiliating military defeat, abandon the military option, and come to terms with the reality of a Jewish state in the middle of the Arab world. Far from stabilizing Israel, as was so ardently hoped by the Zionist leadership, the expulsion and the creation of a refugee nation were to contribute to continually escalating frictions. For many years the Israeli leadership ignored the fact that politically deprived, homeless Palestinians living in impossible conditions in refugee camps were evolving a radical nationalist movement. This movement, characterized by desperation and terrorism, has become a detonator for internal Arab conflicts and a major cause for the escalation of Israeli-Arab tensions.

In the early 1960s, Golda Meir, then Israel’s fourth prime minister, claimed that repatriation of the Palestinian refugees would mean the placing of a time bomb inside Israel. She ignored the danger that the time bomb, if not defused, would explode at Israel’s doorstep, which it did in 1967. Nearly twenty years had to elapse before it became clear that the Palestinian refugee problem was not only a humanitarian but a national problem, whose solution is the only key to a permanent settlement of the Israel-Arab conflict. By a strange twist of fate, it was again Golda Meir who, after 1967, justified Israel’s occupation of the West Bank and Gaza—

including the time bomb of a half-million Palestinian refugees—with the argument of “security.”



The following abbreviations are used throughout the notes:

CZA—Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem

ISA—Israel State Archives, Jerusalem

PDD—Political and Diplomatic Document of CZA and ISA, December 1947–May 1948 (Jerusalem, 1979)

DFPI—Documents on Foreign Policy of Israel, ISA: vol. 1, May–September 1948 (Jerusalem, 1981); vol. 2—October 1948–April 1949 (Jerusalem, 1984); vol. 3—armistice negotiations, 1949 (Jerusalem, 1983)

MGH—Mapam Archives, Givat Haviva

1. In its plan for partition, the UNSCOP projected a Jewish state with 497,000 Arabs and 90,000 Bedouin; the final plan adopted by the UN on 29 November 1947, allotted the enclave of Jaffa and Beersheba to the Arab state, which reduced the projected Arab population by about 180,000, according to estimates given in various UN hearings. See UNSCOP Report to General Assembly, official record, second session, supp. 11; Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestine Question, summary records of meetings, 25 September–25 November 1947, 19–24.
2. Rony E. Gabbay, *A Political Study of the Arab-Jewish Conflict: The Arab Refugee Problem* (Geneva, 1959), 110.
3. Walid Khalidi, “Why Did the Palestinians Leave?” (London) Arab Information Centre Paper, no. 3.
4. Michael Bar-Zohar, *Ben-Gurion: A Political Biography*, vol. 2 (Hebrew, Tel Aviv, 1977), 702–3.
5. David Ben-Gurion, *War Diaries*, 3 vols., ed. G. Rivlin and E. Orrén (Hebrew, Tel Aviv, 1982), 1 May 1948, 382.
6. PDD, doc. 239, 402.
7. See CZA, 525/9007, quoted by Yoram Nimrod in *Al Hamishmar*, 10 April 1985; see also ISA, 179/18, 1 March 1948.
8. See Khalidi, “Why Did the Palestinians Leave?” This paper contains many previously unknown details gleaned from a meticulous analysis of Jewish, Arab, and other sources.
9. Aharon Cohen, *Israel and the Arab World* (Hebrew, Tel Aviv, 1964), 433.
10. *Ibid.*, 39, 41.
11. *Ibid.*, 460.
12. *Ibid.*, 461.
13. See Mutzeiri, *Ha'aretz*, 10 May 1948.
14. Menahem Kapeliuk, *Davar*, 6 November 1948.
15. Khalidi, “Why Did The Palestinians Leave?” 5.
16. *UN Weekly Bulletin*, 22 July 1947, 220.
17. Sharett to Zaslani (Shiloah), 26 April 1948, PDD, doc. 410, 674; Sharett to John MacDonald (U.S. consul in Jerusalem), *UN Weekly Bulletin*, 28 October 1947, 565.
18. Cohen, report to Mapam political committee, October 1948, MGH.
19. Ben-Gurion, *War Diaries*, 16 June 1948, 524.
20. Cohen, “In the Face of the Arab Evacuation” (Hebrew), *L'Ahdut Haavodah*, January 1948.
21. See Joseph Weitz, *Diaries*, vol. 4 (Hebrew,

- Jerusalem, 1951), 26 March 1948, 257; 17 August 1949, 358.
22. Benny Morris, "The Causes and Character of the Arab Exodus from Palestine," *Middle Eastern Studies* 22, no. 1 (January 1986): 9–11.
 23. Ben-Gurion, *War Diaries*, 19 December 1947, 58.
 24. *Ibid.*, 1 January 1948, 97–103; Bar-Zohar, *Ben-Gurion*, 680.
 25. Financial inducements were also used to encourage Arab emigration; see Weitz, *Diaries*.
 26. PDD, doc. 45, 14 December 1947, 60.
 27. Ben-Gurion, *War Diaries*, 22 December 1947, 67.
 28. *Ibid.*
 29. Bar-Zohar describes it as the first operational plan of the IDF, even though it predated the establishment of the state. *Ben-Gurion*, vol. 2, 703–4. This material does not appear in the English version.
 30. Uri Millstein, *Hadashot*, 11 January 1985; See also Millstein's interview with Yadin in *Davar Hashavuah*, 10 March 1982; Ben-Zion Dinur, Yehuda Slucki, Shaul Avigur, Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, Yisrael Galili, *History of the Haganah*, (Hebrew, Tel Aviv, 1972), 1955–60.
 31. Yadin, quoted by Millstein, *Davar Hashavuah*, 10 March 1982.
 32. *Ibid.*
 33. Khalidi, "Why Did the Palestinians Leave?" 3.
 34. PDD, ed. note, 625.
 35. David Shipler, *New York Times*, 22 October 1979; see also J. Bowyer Bell, *Terror Out of Zion* (New York, 1977), 296; Dan Kurzman, *Genesis 1948* (New York, 1972), 148; and Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre, *O Jerusalem*, (New York, 1972), 248.
 36. PDD, doc. 376, 625, no. 1.
 37. See Israeli Ministry of Defense, *History of the War of Independence* (Hebrew, Tel Aviv, 1959), 94, 117.
 38. Ben-Gurion, *War Diaries*, 15 July 1948, 589.
 39. Report to Mapam political committee, 14 March 1951, by Riftin, MGH.
 40. Ben-Gurion, *War Diaries*, 6 February 1948, speech at Mapai council, 210–11.
 41. *Ibid.*
 42. *Ibid.*, 11 May 1948, 409.
 43. Elhanan Oren, *On the Way to the City* (Hebrew, Tel Aviv, 1976).
 44. *Ibid.*
 45. Ben-Gurion, *War Diaries*, 1 May 1948, 378; 27 October 1948, 780. See also Bell, *Terror*, 301–3.
 46. Peretz Kidron interview with Ben Dunkelman, *Haolam Hazei*, 9 January 1980.
 47. Ben-Gurion, *War Diaries*, 8 May 1948, 400; 15 July 1948, 589, n. 5; 5 August 1948, 633; 8 August 1948, 639; 10 November 1948, 807; DFPI, vol. 1, doc. 406, 442.
 48. See Simha Flapan, *Zionism and the Palestinians* (London, 1979), 302.
 49. *New Judea* (London), August–September 1937, 220.
 50. Weitz, *Diaries*, 5 June 1948, 298.
 51. Ben-Gurion, *War Diaries*, 18 August 1948, 652–54; 27 October 1948, 776.
 52. Ben-Gurion, minutes of the Jewish Agency Executive, 12 June 1948, CZA.
 53. See note 51.
 54. Ben-Gurion, *War Diaries*, speech at meeting of provisional government, 16 June 1948, 525.
 55. DFPI, vol. 1, doc. 329, 334.
 56. *Ibid.*, doc. 352, 369.
 57. Elias Koussa in *Ner.*, vol. 2, no. 18–21, 13 July 1951, 26–27.
 58. Joseph Schechtman, *The Arab Refugee Problem* (New York, 1952), 95–96, 100–01.
 59. ISA, 29 July 1948, 2570/11. Quoted by Yoram Nimrod, *Al Hamishmar*, 13 June 1985.
 60. Mapam resolutions. 25–27 May 1948, MGH.
 61. Tom Segev, *The First Israelis* (New York, 1985), 59.
 62. Yeroham Cohen, *In the Light of Day and in Darkness* (Hebrew, Tel Aviv, 1969), 271–74.
 63. Ze'ev Tzur, *From the Partition Dispute to the Allon Plan* (Tel Aviv, 1982) 67.
 64. Ben-Gurion, *War Diaries*, at the first meeting of the People's Council, 4 May 1948, 387.
 65. Reported by the justice minister, Pinchas Rosen, in cabinet meeting, 20 August 1950; see ISA 43/5543/c/3633.